

Has the use of VAK (learning styles) changed in classrooms since 2018? (This, and other findings...)

Before we dive into this week's results - we have a quick request from the data team at Teacher Tapp ■■■■■!

If you haven't already added your school to your profile please do so! (You can do this by heading to the Menu > User Profile > Choose your school).

Don't worry - we don't use the school information to learn anything about you specifically. We use the information about your school's free school meal quartile and size to help understand how teachers between different schools vary.

Now, onto results!

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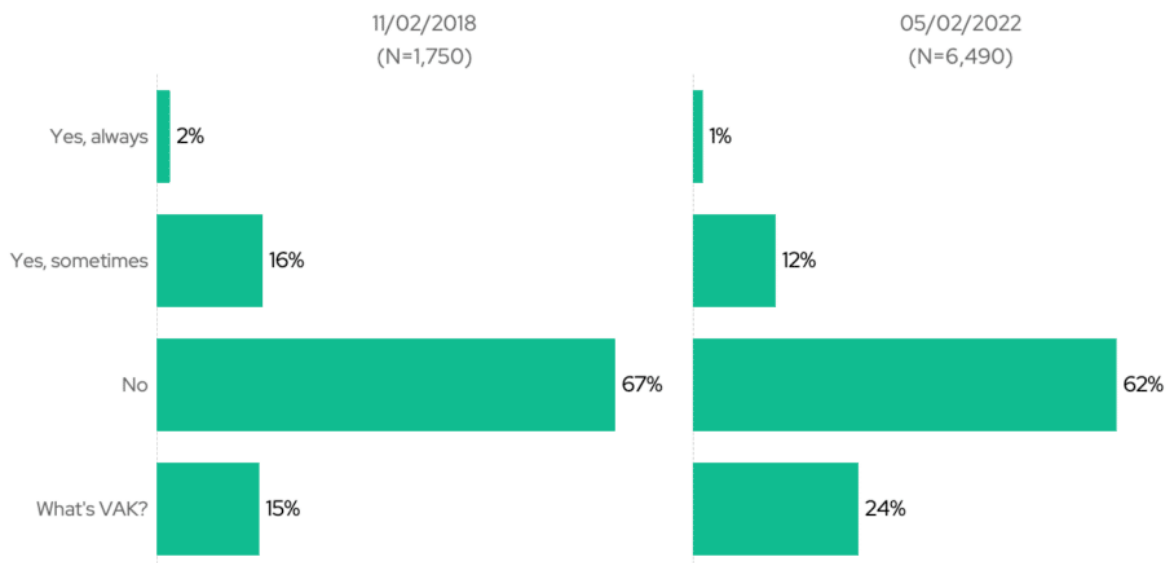
1. Is VAK enduring?

Back in 2018, 'furlough' wasn't a known phrase and Teacher Tapp was still in its infancy. Back then, around 18% of teachers reported that they were differentiating their lessons using VAK (Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic) 'learning styles'. Even then the concept was controversial, and it was falling out of fashion, but have things changed any further in the past few years?

As of the past month, only 13% of teachers say are differentiating using VAK. And, perhaps more importantly, there has been a marked increase in teachers who know nothing about VAK

- having risen from 15% in 2018 to 24% now!

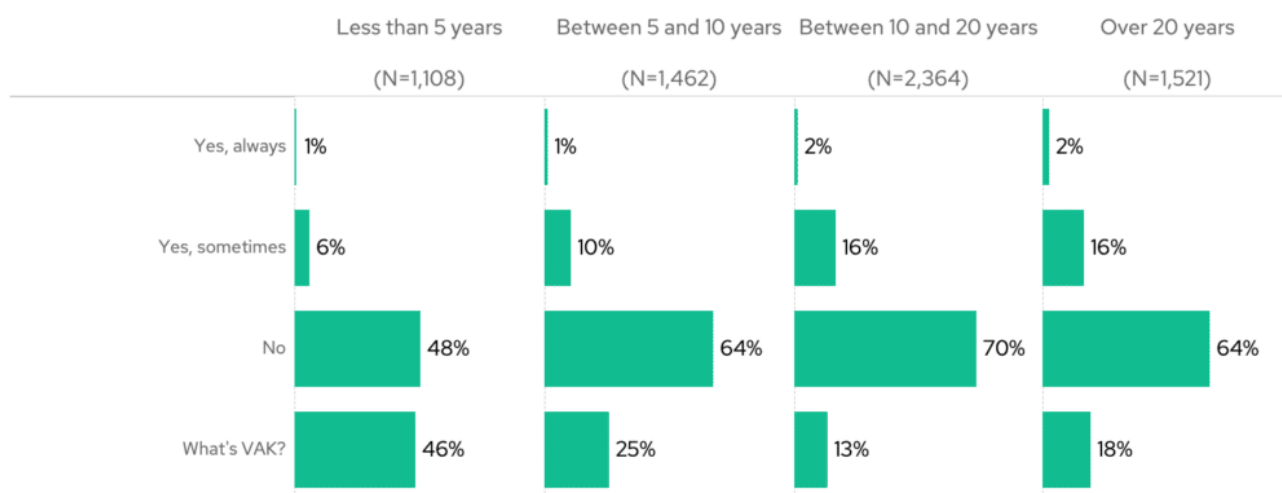
Do you differentiate your lessons using VAK?



Teacher responses vary from 1,750 to 6,490, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

How did this happen? Well, it's the less experienced teachers amongst you, coming up through the ranks now, who have never heard of it - with 46% saying they don't know what VAK is!

Do you differentiate your lessons using VAK?

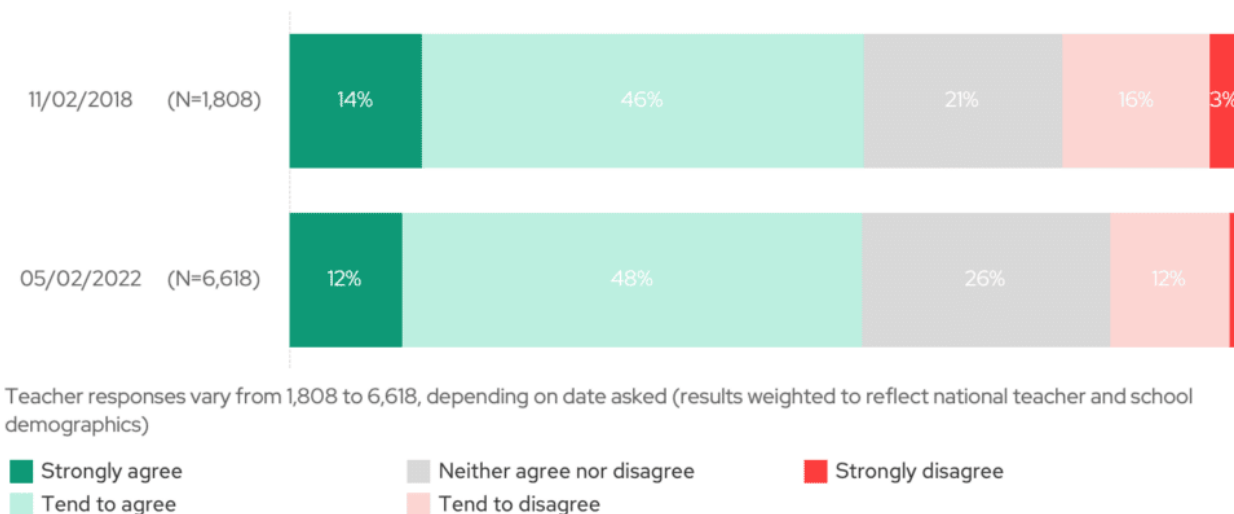


Question answered by 6,490 teachers on 05/02/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

However, where VAK is shifting out of practice - other things have steadfastly remained the same. Accommodating student interests in the curriculum is one such example.

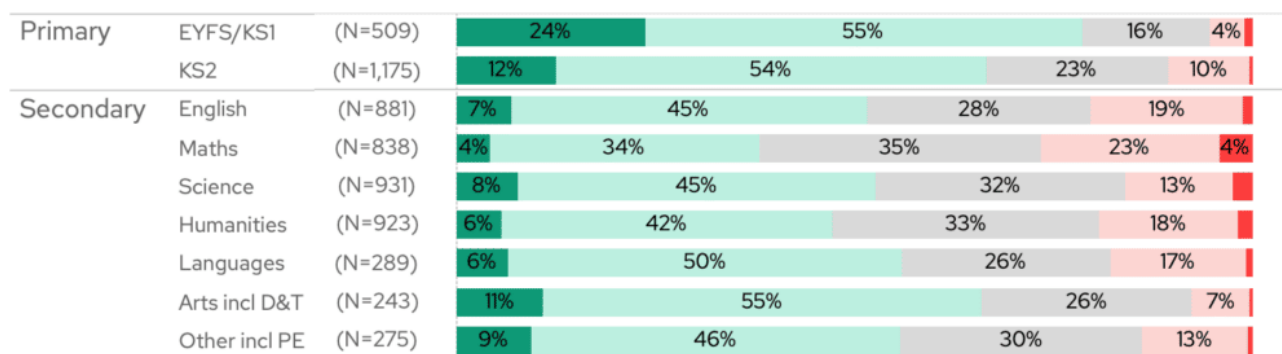
When last asked in 2018, 60% of you felt that teachers should accommodate children's interests into the curriculum – and this has remained largely unchanged.

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Teachers should, as far as possible, accomodate student interests in the curriculum.



Primary teachers are still the strongest believers, with 70% of primary teachers agreeing that the curriculum should accommodate student interests. Secondary teachers remain divided; with just 38% of maths teachers, but 66% of arts teachers agreeing.

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Teachers should, as far as possible, accomodate student interests in the curriculum.



Question answered by 6,064 teachers on 05/02/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)



I guess next week it's going to be time for us to dig out a look on mindsets! (Is that still a thing?!)

[2. Do observations work?](#)

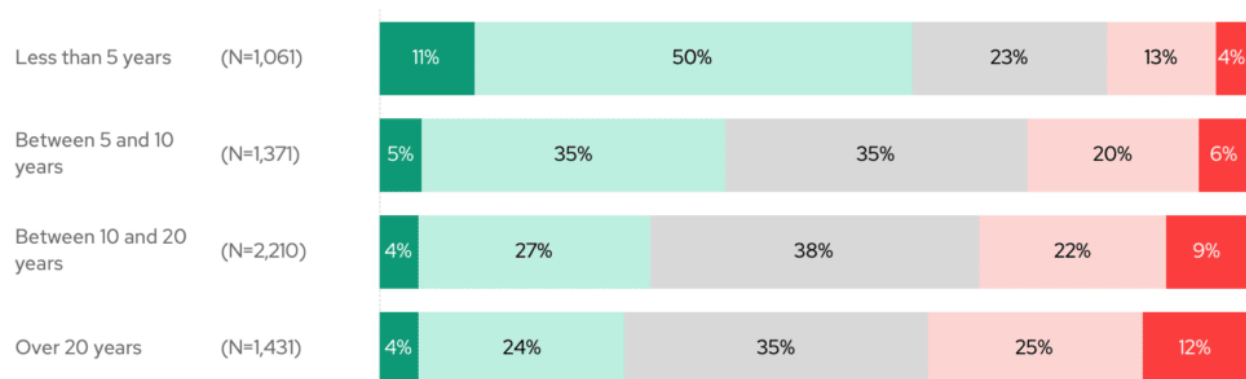
Observations can be very stressful. Having an observer can change the dynamic of the classroom and then there's the hit-and-miss of what happens afterwards. Will the feedback be helpful or not?

Hmmm. Not quite, a lot of the time – as just 40% of you believe that observations and feedback are helping you become a better teacher!

The most experienced teachers find observations the least useful, with barely over a quarter giving it the vote of confidence.

On the other hand, newly qualified teachers – with less than 5 years experience – were more often singing their praises, (with 61% saying that observations are helpful).

Observations and feedback are helping me to become a better teacher



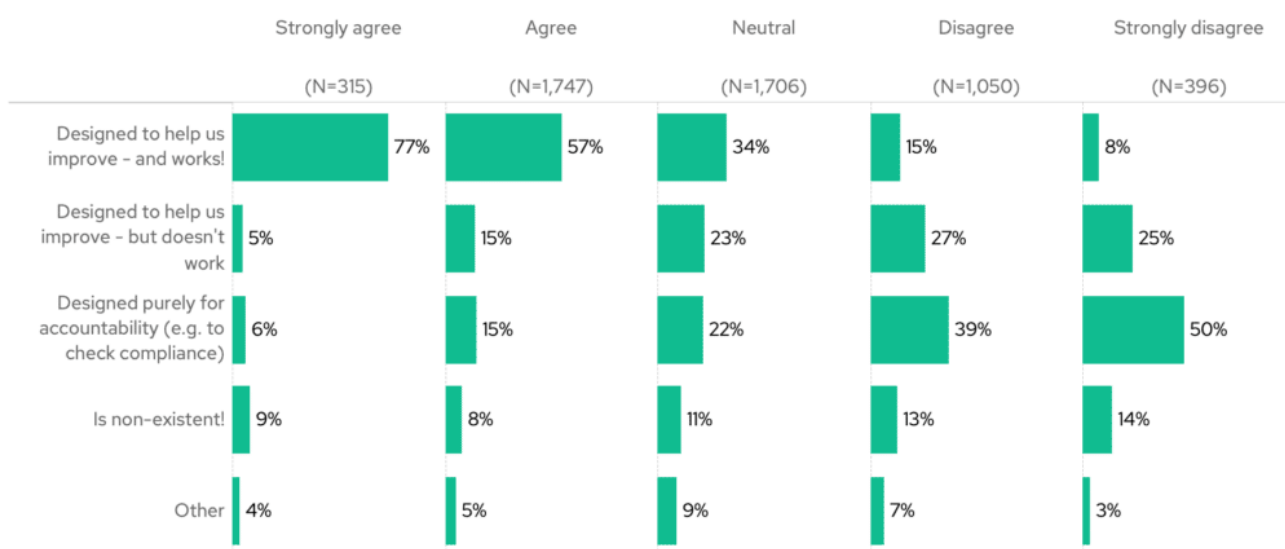
Question answered by teachers on 29/01/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Strongly agree Neutral Strongly disagree
Agree Disagree

Some of the difference does come down to the way observations work in your school.

Those who find observations useful are more likely to say that their school's process works well. Whereas if you haven't had a good experience with observations, then you're most likely to think the process is purely for accountability.

Observations and feedback are helping me to become a better teacher (across) versus My school's observation process is... (down)

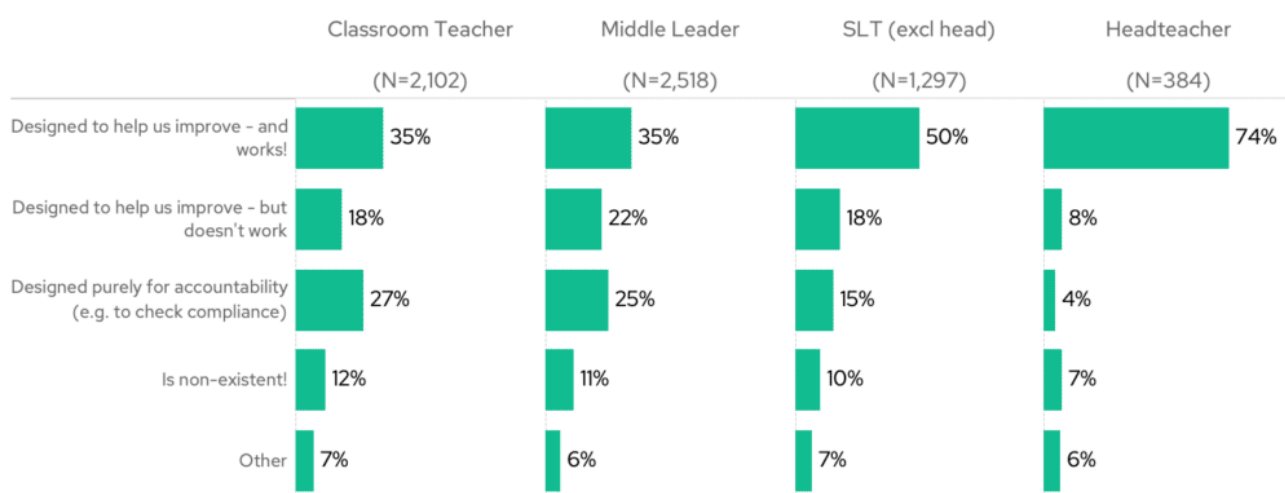


Question answered by 5,214 teachers on 04/02/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Note the big difference in how classroom teachers vs senior leaders feel about their school's observation process. Only 4% of heads say the process is designed for accountability and compliance - compared to 27% of classroom teachers.

What might account for such differing views? (Do let us know on social media or via 'contact us' in the app).

My school's observation process is...



Question answered by 6,301 teachers on 04/02/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

3. Can (and should) teachers work from home?

While the rest of the world is switching to remote working, there is an increasing pressure on schools to offer 'flexible working'. One suggestion has been that teachers could perhaps have a day a fortnight at home, with all their planning periods rolled up into one. But would this work?

Headteacher Chris Dyson suggested we ask three questions about the ability for headteachers, senior leaders, and classroom teachers to work from home.

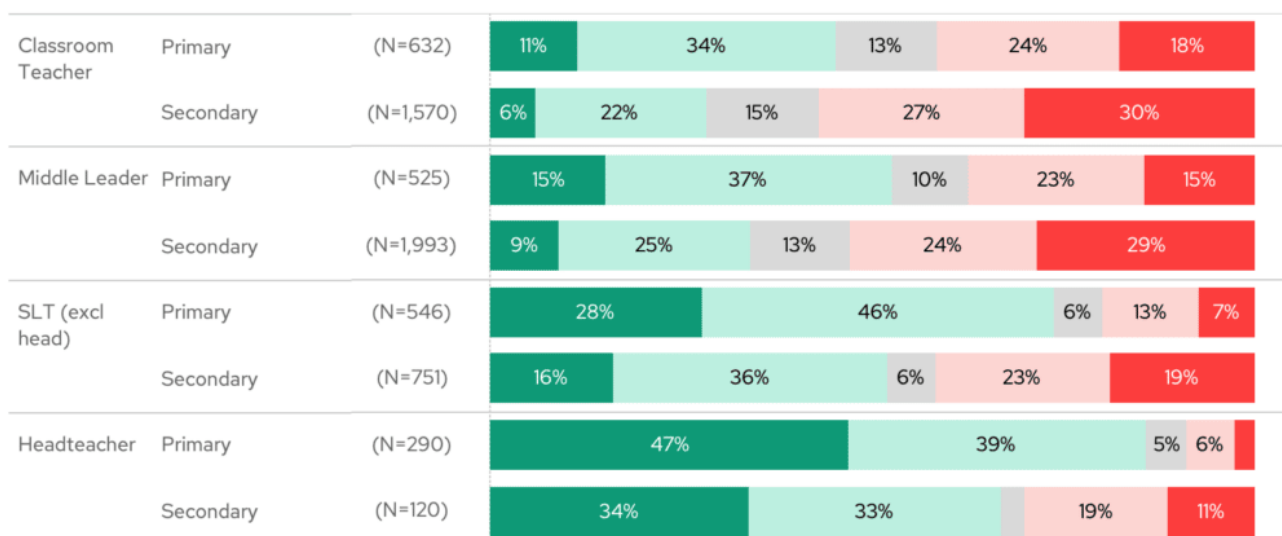
Teachers were divided on this one - with 50% of teachers saying that headteachers should be allowed a regular day to work from home and 55% saying that classroom teachers should have a regular day.

As people quite rightly asked - was this a result of people voting in their own self-interest? The answer to that is: kind of, yes!

While just 40% of classroom teachers and middle leaders thought that heads should be allowed a regular day to work from home, 81% of headteachers thought the same.

However, these results don't quite paint the full picture, as primary teachers were much more likely to allow working from home than secondary teachers.

Should HEADTEACHERS be allowed a regular day to work from home? (For example, once per fortnight?)



Question answered by 6,427 teachers on 31/01/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

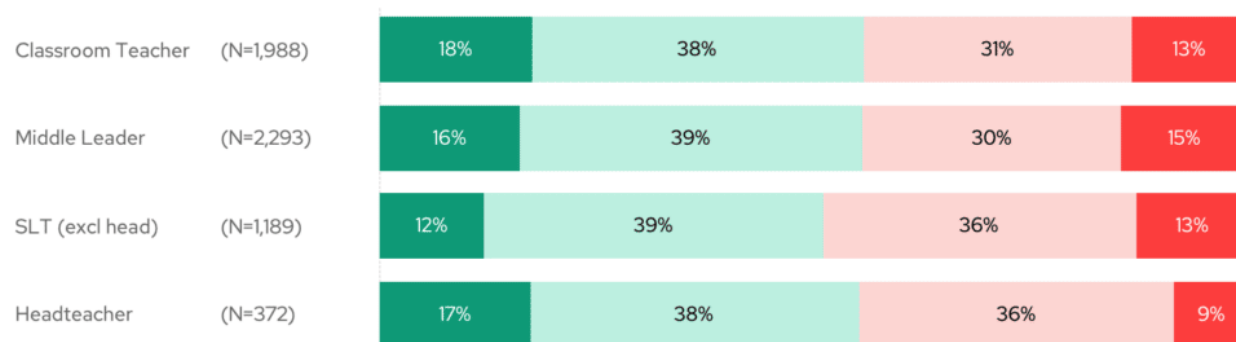


At the other end of the scale, we asked whether classroom teachers should have a day to work from home, and the results were significantly more balanced between seniorities. What's true is that over half of classroom teachers thought that they should be allowed a regular day to work from home.

Headteachers were similarly positive - with 55% also thinking that classroom teachers could

have a day to work from home, but not as positive when compared to headteachers working from home!

Should CLASSROOM TEACHERS be allowed a regular day to work from home? (For example, once per fortnight?)



Question answered by teachers on 31/01/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Strongly Agree (dark green), Agree (light green), Disagree (light red), Strongly Disagree (dark red)

A few people wrote to us and said that if they had known they would be asked about all types of teachers, they would have been more positive from the outset. Showing a well-documented phenomenon that people typically don't like it when their colleagues are given a benefit which won't be extended to them!

That said, there was a general trend that if you thought heads should work from home a day a week, you were also happy for classroom teachers to work from home a day a week. Of those teachers who agreed that heads could work from home, three-quarters also felt that classroom teachers could too.

4. Sick pay

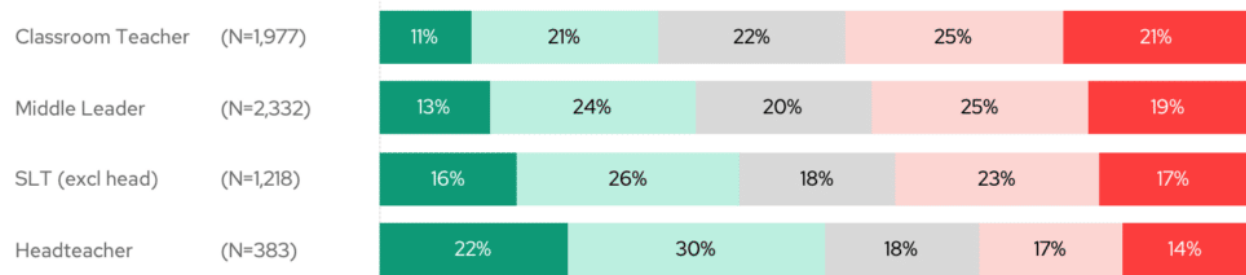
As everyone is grappling with staff absences, there's been some unrest about the longer isolation periods for those who are unvaccinated and the pressure this places on schools. For this reason, some organisations (not schools) have changed the rules so that unvaccinated persons off for covid-related reasons only receive statutory sick pay (rather than full pay).

You were fairly divided as to whether this was a good idea or not. In total, just over a third of you were in favour of this move for your school, whereas 43% of you were against this.

The only group which had a majority in favour of it was headteachers - with 52% in favour of changing their policy.

Some organisations have changed their policies so that unvaccinated employees don't receive full pay (only statutory sick pay) if off for covid-related reasons.

Would you want your school to do this?



Question answered by teachers on 01/02/2022 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Yes - Strongly Agree
Yes - Agree

Neutral
No - Disagree

No - Strongly Disagree

Finally... we know you love the daily read, so here are the ones from last week

The most read tip from the past week was: [Practical ways to improve feedback in observations](#)

And here are the rest for your reference:

- [In defence of the teaching profession](#)
- [What can middle leaders do to help with workload?](#)
- [Making group work more productive!](#)
- [How to use tone of voice to improve behaviour management](#)
- [How to figure out what pupils have missed with pupils in and out of school](#)